

IN THE CLAIMS:

Replace all the claims now in the case with the following new claims:

~~1-21.~~ A method for fabricating a semiconductor device, comprising:

forming an element insulating layer on a substrate;
forming a gate insulating layer on the substrate;
forming a gate electrode on the gate insulating layer;

forming a sidewall on a side of the gate electrode;
injecting an ion injection species into the substrate using the gate electrode as a mask;

heat-treating the element insulating layer to decrease a fluorine concentration in the element insulating layer to a level less than 1×10^{20} atoms/cm²;

forming a metal layer on the gate electrode; and
heat-treating the metal layer and the gate electrode to form a metal silicide on the gate electrode,

wherein said heat-treating the element insulating layer step is performed before said forming a metal layer step.

~~2-22.~~ The method of claim ~~21~~¹, wherein said injecting an ion injection species step includes injecting fluorine and boron.

~~3~~ 23. The method of claim ~~21~~¹, wherein said injecting an ion injection species step includes injecting BF_2 .

~~4~~ 24. The method of claim ~~21~~¹, wherein said heat-treating the element insulating layer step is performed at a temperature of 700°C .

~~5~~ 25. The method of claim ~~21~~¹, further comprising heat-treating the semiconductor substrate and activating the ion injection species at a temperature higher than a temperature of said heat-treating the element insulating layer step,

wherein said heat-treating the semiconductor substrate step is performed after said heat-treating the element insulating layer step.

~~6~~ 26. The method as claimed in claim ~~21~~¹, wherein said forming a metal layer step includes forming a titanium layer on the gate electrode.

~~7~~ 27. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device, comprising:

- forming an element insulation layer on a substrate;
- forming a gate insulating layer on the substrate;
- forming a gate electrode on the gate insulating layer;
- forming a sidewall on a side of the gate electrode;

injecting an ion injection species into the substrate using the gate electrode as a mask;

heat-treating the element insulation layer at a temperature which discharges fluorine in the element insulation layer without reacting the fluorine and silicon in the element insulation layer;

forming a metal layer on the gate electrode; and
heat-treating the metal layer and the gate electrode to form a metal silicide on the gate electrode,

wherein said heat-treating the element insulation layer step is performed before said forming a metal layer step.

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--28. The method of claim ~~27~~⁷, wherein said injecting an ion injection species step includes injecting fluorine and boron.

~~9~~
--29. The method of claim ~~27~~⁷, wherein said injecting an ion injection species step includes injecting BF_2 .

~~10~~
--30. The method of claim ~~27~~⁷, wherein said heat-treating the element insulation layer step is at a temperature of 700°C .

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--31. The method of claim ~~27~~⁷, wherein said heat-treating the element insulation layer step reduces a density of the fluorine in the element insulation layer to less than 1×10^{20} atoms/cm².

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¹²/~~22~~. The method of claim ⁷/~~27~~, further comprising heat-treating the semiconductor substrate to activate the ion injection species at a temperature higher than a temperature of said heat-treating the element insulation layer step.

¹³/~~33~~. The method as claimed in claim ⁷/~~27~~, wherein said forming a metal layer step includes forming a titanium layer on the gate electrode.

¹⁴/~~34~~. A method for fabricating a semiconductor device, comprising:

forming an element insulation layer;

forming a gate insulating layer on a substrate;

forming a gate electrode on the gate insulating layer;

forming a sidewall on a side of the gate electrode;

forming a surface insulating layer over an entire surface of the substrate;

injecting an ion injection species into the substrate using the gate electrode as a mask;

heat-treating the element insulation layer at a temperature which decreases a fluorine concentration in the element insulation layer;

removing the surface insulating layer;

forming a metal layer on the gate electrode; and

heat-treating the metal layer and the gate electrode to form a metal silicide on the gate electrode.

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~~--35.~~ The method of claim ¹⁴~~34~~, wherein said injecting an ion injection species step includes injecting fluorine and boron.

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~~--36.~~ The method of claim ¹⁴~~34~~, wherein said injecting an ion injection species step includes injecting BF₂.

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~~--37.~~ The method of claim ¹⁴~~34~~, wherein said heat-treating the element insulating layer step is at a temperature of 700°C.

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~~--38.~~ The method of claim ¹⁴~~34~~, wherein said heat-treating the element insulating layer step decreases the fluorine concentration in the element insulating layer to a level less than 1×10^{20} atoms/cm².

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~~--39.~~ The method of claim ¹⁴~~34~~, further comprising activating the ion injection species by heat-treating the semiconductor substrate at a temperature higher than a temperature of said heat-treating the element insulating layer step,

wherein said activating step is performed after said heat-treating the element insulating layer step.

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~~--40.~~ The method as claimed in claim ¹⁴~~34~~, wherein said forming a metal layer step includes forming a titanium layer on the gate electrode.